

9 August 1956

INTER OFFICE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Minutes of the "special meeting" held on 16 July 1956 at 1400 hours in room 1521 Barton Hall.

Present:

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The meeting was called to discuss the Trimmer paper "Soviet Jamming - New Developments" dated June 1, 1956. In fact, however, the discussions were centered upon the recommendations of the BEAM Committee in regard to the informal approach to the USSR on the termination of VOA Russian language broadcast jamming. In addition to the BEAM paper, a cable from the State Department to the AmEmbassy, Moscow, was exhibited, suggesting an approach to negotiating with the Soviets regarding jamming, as well as a memorandum from the Ambassador in Moscow to the State Department.

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[redacted] led the discussion and stated that the main point of concern was in terms of radio spectrum usage if the jamming abates or ceases. Since the U.S.-sponsored broadcasters, VOA, RFE, and RLN, enjoy a privilege in using the number of frequencies they do as a result of the anti-Communist front, reduction in jamming in return for a reduction in frequencies would pose serious technical considerations. Among these, the U.S. Government, i.e., the FCC or others, would probably bring the review of frequencies into focus. Since occupancy of channels is primary, the loss of a channel is usually permanent. The European channel occupancy is likewise aggravated, and the loss is even more permanent because of the complexity of European frequency usage. A general discussion followed.

On the Soviet side of the picture, there is every advantage in either an abatement or cessation of jamming. It clears the whole matter of illegality of jamming, demonstrates a fictitious good will, clarifies the complicated matter of aggravated interference both to themselves and to the spectrum usage in the "free world."

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Finally, the Soviets probably would not give up the jamming plants installed, could put them into immediate usage at a moment's notice, have gained everything and lost nothing in return for a reduction in broadcast frequencies, which probably would be lost to the U.S.

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[redacted] felt some concern that the technical considerations, particularly those involving frequency usage, had been ignored in the proposed negotiation with the Soviets. In particular, the telecommunications interests of ODM, FCC, and others should be considered before any approach was made.

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[redacted] expressed a personal belief that the main object of any approach should be what the Soviets were getting, not those accruing to the U.S.

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[redacted] and others agreed that the Agency interest was in jeopardy because of its commitments in the field of radio broadcasting, particularly to the Satellites. That is, if the Agency supports the USIA (VOA) on a Soviet negotiation, it is at cross purposes with its intent to the Satellites.

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[redacted] ORR, questioned the accuracy of a statement in the [redacted] paper about the existence of a microwave cable extending from Moscow to Vladivostok.

The IOTA Committee feels that insufficient consideration has been given to the technical considerations involved in a proposed USIA approach to the Soviets on the possibility of the cessation of jamming. The IOTA Committee feels the recommendations of the Trimmer paper are sound and that technical considerations be further weighed before a U.S. position is established.

Respectfully submitted,

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[redacted]  
Acting Secretary

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